

INTRODUCTION

1. Please take God's Word and turn with me to 1 Corinthians chapter 12.
2. This morning we're going to begin our look at the list of spiritual gifts as they are mentioned in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10.
3. So that we have the gifts we're looking at first in our minds, I would like to read verses 8-11.
4. As I said last time, spiritual gifts are not talents.
5. Everyone has a talent that you're given at your physical birth.
6. Spiritual gifts are given at the new birth.
7. Spiritual gifts are supernatural abilities given by the Holy Spirit for serving the body of Christ
8. In the list that occurs in verses 8-10 we have both permanent edifying gifts and temporary sign gifts.
9. The permanent edifying gifts are "the word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, faith, prophecy, [and] the distinguishing of spirits."

10. In verse 28 Paul mentions three more: "teachers (teaching), helps, [and] administrations."
11. The temporary sign gifts begin in verse 9, "healing."
12. Then verse 10, "miracles, tongues, and...the interpretation of tongues."
13. Also in verse 28 we have three of the four listed: "miracles, healings, tongues."
14. Last time I mentioned the word cessationist.
15. And I said a cessationist is one who believes some of the gifts ceased.
16. I am a cessationist.
17. I believe all the temporary sign gifts ceased with the apostles and the only gifts that are in operation today are the permanent sign gifts.
18. When we move into the temporary sign gifts I'll say more and give you my reasons but for now let's look at verse 8 which begins the permanent edifying gifts.
19. Keep in mind that all these gifts are "through or by the Spirit."

LESSON

I. The Word of Wisdom (v.8a)

1. This is a Speaking Gift

1. We know that because of the use of the term "word" (logos)

2. This gift may have been revelatory at times during the apostolic era
3. The term "wisdom" (Sophia) "is used in so many ways in the NT that it is impossible to isolate it only to revelation" (MacArthur).
4. In the NT it most often refers to the ability to understand God's Word and apply it
 1. Matthew 13:54 says, "When He had come to His own country, He taught them in their synagogue, so that they were astonished and said, "Where did this Man get this wisdom and these mighty works?"
 2. In James 1:5, we hear the phrase "If any of you lacks wisdom" which indicates that some don't lack wisdom.
 3. James 3:13 shows understanding and application used together when it says, "Who is wise and understanding among you? Let him show by good conduct that his works are done in the meekness of wisdom."
 4. James 3:17 shows where this wisdom comes from: "But the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, willing to yield, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy."
 5. Proverbs 2:6 says, "For the LORD gives wisdom; from His mouth come knowledge and understanding."

6. Paul said in Colossians 1:28, "Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus."
7. When Stephen disputed with the Jewish leaders in Acts 6, "they were not able to resist the wisdom and the Spirit by which he spoke" (v.10).
8. "Later, before the Sanhedrin, his defense was characterized by such wisdom that the only answer the council could give was stoning (7:54ff) [Flynn, 105].
9. Now when we apply this to the Spirit-given gift of "the word of wisdom," we might say that this is referring to "insight into the truth of God's Word" (McGee).
10. It is "speech full of God's wisdom under the impulse of the Spirit of God" (Robertson), so this gift then has to do with "the exposition of wisdom.
11. "It is speech that has wisdom as its content" (KJV Bible Commentary).
12. "Wisdom, then, refers basically to applying truths discovered, to the ability to make skillful and practical application of the truth to life situations" (MacArthur, 1 Corinthians).

2. The gift of the word of wisdom is the Spirit-given ability to understand God's Word and apply it

John MacArthur says, "Communicating wisdom is the function of the expositor, who draws not only from his own study of Scripture but from the many insights and interpretations of commentators and other Bible scholars. It is also the ability a counselor must have in order to apply God's truth to the questions and problems brought to him. It is a feature in the gift of the pastor, who must know, understand, and be able to apply God's Word in order to lead his people as he should" (1 Corinthians).

II. The Word of Knowledge (v.8b)

This gift "logically precedes the first, because ordinarily knowledge comes before wisdom" (MacArthur).

"Knowledge differs from wisdom. Knowledge is information. Wisdom is the right use of information to achieve proper ends" (Leslie Flynn, 19 Gifts of the Spirit, 102).

1. The Word of Knowledge is a Speaking Gift

1. It too has the term "word" (logos) associated with it
2. It is broad in its meaning and also may be used in a revelatory sense by the apostles
3. The word used here for "knowledge" is the Greek word gnosis (noun).
4. What group of false teachers is this word associated with in the NT? The gnostics.

5. Gnosis means "primarily a seeking to know, an inquiry, investigation. It denotes in the NT knowledge, especially of spiritual truth"
 1. In 1 Corinthians 15:51 Paul uses knowledge to convey the mysteries that surround the resurrection of the body. He says, "Behold, I tell you a mystery: We shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed."
 2. He uses knowledge the same way in 1 Thessalonians 4:15 when he says, "For this we say to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive and remain until the coming of the Lord will by no means precede those who are asleep."
6. The use of knowledge here is in the "sense of conveying new truth."
7. We don't have new revelation being given today, so in that sense "the word of knowledge has ceased, because the Christian faith has been once for all delivered to the saints (Jude 3). The body of Christian doctrine is complete" (Bible Commentary).
8. "In a secondary sense, ...the word of knowledge may still be "utterance supernaturally imparted of truths already revealed"
9. "communicating insight into the mysteries of His revelation, those truths that could not be known apart from God's revelation" (MacArthur).

10. "perceiving and understanding the truths of God's Word" (Arthur).
 11. Leslie Flynn says, "The gift of the word of knowledge is the charisma which enables the believer to search, systematize, and summarize the teachings of the Word of God. Through it, the Christian is enabled to acquire deep insight into divine truth. This supernatural ability brings illumination of God's thoughts not discoverable by human reason" (103).
 12. Flynn goes on to say that some see this gift being the same as the gift of teaching because "teaching and utterance of knowledge" only "helps others only when communicated" (103).
2. The Word of knowledge is the Spirit-given ability to observe biblical facts and make conclusions, to search out the things of God in the terms of the knowledge of facts
 1. "Knowledge majors on grasping the meaning of the truth; wisdom emphasizes the practical conviction and conduct that applies it"
 2. "Knowledge is the academic side, and wisdom is the application side."

3. "There are different ways that this gift is manifested.
 1. It can belong to people who have never been to college or seminary, but they have an ability to study the Bible, draw out facts, and make conclusions by observation.
 2. It is energized in different ways.
 3. A hundred people might have it, yet it might work differently with each one. It might be in combination with wisdom" (MacArthur).
4. "Whether or not we have this gift, we are to 'grow' in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. 3:18).
5. Paul's prayer for the Corinthians was that they might be 'enriched by Him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge' (1 Cor. 1:5).
6. He prayed for the Colossians that they 'might be filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding' (Col. 1:9)" (Flynn).
7. Robert L. Thomas, says, "Since this gift was revelatory in nature and intimately related to the gifts of apostleship and prophecy, it had no further usefulness after completion of the period of special revelation. With the completion of a written revelation, it no longer had a function" (Under Spiritual Gifts, 181).

III. Faith (v.9)

1. This Does Not Refer to the Initial Trust in Christ for Salvation
2. This refers to "deeper expressions of faith" (EBC)

3. 1
Corinthians 13:2, "And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing."
4. "George Muller is a classic example of a man with the gift of faith. Without ever making his needs known to anyone but God, he cared for 10,000 orphans over a period of sixty years" (Believer's Commentary).
5. This is "probably an unusual measure of trust in God beyond that exercised by most Christians" (Commentary).
6. Chuck Swindoll says the person with this gift "lives on the cutting edge of faith with such daring trust that their lives would not make sense if God did not exist. They are Hebrews 11 people – living monuments of faith – enigmas to the world but examples of encouragement to the church."
7. John Calvin says, the "term *faith* is employed here to mean a special faith" (Calvin's Commentaries: 1 Corinthians). But he is not thinking of this the way it sounds. He means something entirely different.
8. He says this is "A special faith is of such a kind as does not apprehend Christ wholly, for redemption, righteousness, and sanctification, but only in so far as miracles are performed in his name. Judas had a faith of this kind."

9. This gift is connected to prayer

1. James 5:17-18 - "Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit."
2. Hebrews 11:32-33 - "And what more shall I say? For the time would fail me to tell of Gideon and Barak and Samson and Jephthah, also of David and Samuel and the prophets: who through faith subdued kingdoms, worked righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions."

10. The gift of faith is the Spirit-given ability to trust God in the face of overwhelming obstacles and human impossibilities.

1. "It is a heroic belief in the supernatural, an (invincible) assurance that God can overcome any difficulties, and meet any emergencies"
2. Leslie Flynn says it is "a Spirit-given ability to see something that God wants done and to sustain unwavering confidence that God will do it regardless of seemingly insurmountable obstacles" (157).

CONCLUSION

1. Do you have the gift of wisdom, knowledge or faith?
2. All are needed today in the church.
3. We need those who can accurately interpret God's Word and apply it to our lives but we also need those who by their supernatural God-given faith trust God in the midst of insurmountable circumstances.
4. We need more Hebrews 11 people.
5. As you survey these gifts that we have covered, ask yourself if any of these are the passion of your heart and then begin to exercise them in the Body of Christ.
6. Before we close, let me also ask, "Do you know Jesus?"
7. Have you repented and put your trust fully in Him?
8. He is Lord!
9. Do you acknowledge Him as Lord?
10. Let's consider these questions as we pray together.
11. Let's pray.